

Maulakieve,

Bantry,

Co.Cork

11/05/26

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you to contribute the following submission:

I was born and reared in the Mealagh Valley, at the above address. Our land is situated on a ridge between the Mealagh and Kealkill valleys, and from the highest point, at the eastern end, you can see right down Bantry Bay, as far as Bere Island and the Sheeps Head. This is also the closest point to the proposed windfarm, and demonstrates that structures of 155m in height will be easily visible from these areas, and from the 'Wild Atlantic Way' route that travels both sides of the bay. It will also be visible to the cruise ships which dock in Bantry, and to the sailors travelling up the bay to berth in the marina, all of which are areas of potential growth for tourism, and which have secured large amounts of funding to promote as such.

I have spent most of my career as a primary school teacher in these and the adjacent valleys. I was taught in turn by a proud local woman, who instilled in us the value and unique beauty of our '*áit duachais*'. We learnt the place names and their meaning, and the stories behind this. We learnt about the historical sites, where the cairns and forts were, the souterrains etc. We spent a lot of time exploring the fields, hedgerows, streams and rivers of our locality, and what lived and grew there. The planned invasion of these tranquil, unique places by huge man-made structures and the accompanying damage to the ground, and environment shows a complete lack of respect and understanding by the developers of the value, nuance and history of these places to the people who live here.

The Mealagh valley has a long history of exceptional community. Over 30 years ago, the community recognised that what we had was special, and began working together to consult, plan and build. They leased land, then subsequently purchased land, and built a Community Centre, entirely through voluntary work and contributions. The proposed windfarms, which have been threatening since 1997, have caused immense worry, stress and division over the years in the community. They are in no way an asset. The proposal of a 'Community Support Scheme' approximately valued at 325,000€ per annum (a mere 5.9% of the likely earnings, taking a value of 30% efficiency, and a unit price of 37c per unit) to 'bring about significant positive change in the local area' is both insulting and demonstrates a profound lack of understanding of the relationship the majority of the community have with the land and with each other. If 'significant positive change' was truly a concern to the developer, perhaps they would not be 'throwing the dog a bone' to keep it quiet....

It is most likely that the proposed wind farms will power more data centres as per Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) requirements that all new data centres generate or

purchase enough additional renewable electricity in Ireland to meet at least 80% of their annual energy demand. With Amazon Web Services (AWS), Google, Microsoft, Meta and Equinix, Echelon and Keppel owning the majority of the Data centres, and commonly making direct deals through Corporate Power Purchase agreements with wind farm developers, it is highly likely that these turbines will not only not offer any benefit energetically, socially and economically to the local community, but will cause further damage to the social infrastructure/ community, damage tourism and prevent further development in that area, and cause untold damage to the environment and existing ecosystems in a country which already has an acknowledged biodiversity crisis.

The proposed sites are situated between the Beara Gougane Cycling Route and the Sheep's Head way (East) walking route and also the Slí Bharra ( or St Finbarrs Way pilgrim route) and the Beara-Breifne way, all of which are important historically and scenic tourist routes which would be at least overshadowed if not ruined visually by the presence of huge wind turbines.

The proposed site also encompasses both a standing stone and a cairn, possibly disturbing these historical sites and affecting access to them. Also , within the 2km setback , is the unique megalithic site of Kealkill stone circle, a site of significance which has been marked and prompted by the local community in conjunction with Carriganeass castle. The Kealkill stone circle is much visited due to its unusual formation and breathtaking 360 degree views. Again, the developer fail to take into consideration the effects on the community and the archaeological sites.

I would ask you to consider carefully who this development would benefit, and the long term effects on the locality in making your decision. Thank you for your time,

Is mise, Le Meas

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Carla Collins